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## NEWS AND NOTES

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### THE CLEVELAND MEETING

This year, as usual, the National Council of Teachers of English will hold a program meeting in connection with the meeting of the Department of Superintendence of the N.E.A. The date is February 25, and the place Cleveland.

Two strong programs have been planned, each consisting of four or five papers upon the various aspects of a single general subject. This unification of the discussions, the permanent importance of the specific subjects, and the proved ability of the speakers, several of whom are new to our national programs, insure all who can attend a large return upon their investment of time and cash. The assignment of the Old Stone Church, large and accessible, as our meeting-place is further cause for satisfaction.

A large audience of Cleveland teachers is certain, for the schools of the entire city are to be dismissed that day. There is reason to expect a considerable attendance of teachers from the Middle West, as well as from New York and Pennsylvania. Superintendents who are in Cleveland are likely to be especially interested in our afternoon session if their English teachers will bring it to their notice.

The detailed program follows:

#### MORNING SESSION, 9:30 O'CLOCK

General Topic: The Permanent Speech Campaign.

The Follow-Up of the Speech Drive—P. CASPAR HARVEY, Fort Hays (Kansas) Normal School.

Eradicating Speech Errors—OLIVE M. BEAR, Decatur (Illinois) High School.

Developing Speech Power—HOWARD R. DRIGGS, University of Utah.

Improving the Technique of Expression—R. L. SANDWICK, Deerfield-Shields (Illinois) Township High School.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION, 1:30 O'CLOCK

General Topic: Checking Up on English.

What to Look for in a Composition Lesson—HELEN O. LEMERT, Columbus, Ohio.

What to Look for in a Literature Lesson—J. F. VAN EVERY, Toronto (Can.) High School School of Commerce.

What the Scales Show—C. C. CERTAIN, Cass Technical High School, Detroit.

Setting up School Standards—C. E. DOUGLAS, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Erie, Pa.

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### A GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION

Because the state teachers' meeting in Kansas took place the first week in November, the Better Speech Week was not generally observed at that time, although there were many sections of Kansas where the schools followed the national dates. After the state teachers' meeting, the presidents of the four sections of the Kansas Association of the Teachers of English, Mrs. Mabel S. Hudson, 309 West Main Street, Chanute; Mrs. Nora Prescott Barnes, Alton; Miss Cora V. Vaughn, Winfield; and Miss Mary Lough, Osborne, at the suggestion of P. Caspar Harvey, of the Fort Hays Normal, interested Governor Henry J. Allen in a Better Speech Week for Kansas.

On December 2 the governor issued the following statement as an official pronouncement concerning the movement:

A Better Speech Week for Kansas suggests a movement which is country-wide in its interest. Perhaps at no time in recent years has there been more urgent need for a new appreciation of our common English speech. The present unrest and the uncertainty concerning the allegiance of some who have for years, if not for a lifetime, enjoyed the benefits of our American institutions, give peculiar reason why we should exalt the importance and dignity of our speech. Each man has tools peculiar to his vocation—the carpenter his plane, the miner his pick, the tradesman his price list, the student his textbook; but every true citizen, whatever his occupation, should use his American Language. A Better Speech Week calls attention to the importance of our language. By this bond people from all lands, welcomed into the body politic, are bound together by a tie that is stronger than brass or steel. With this means of approach, men of all classes and ways of thinking are brought into sympathy with one another and led into common service. Our language should be respected because of what it does in promoting the unity and ideals of the American people. I commend every effort made by the schools of the state to train our citizens in the cultivation of lucid, forceful, and uncorrupted diction. This is the real Kansas language.

In parts of Kansas an intensive drive was made for the observance of the Better Speech Week December 7 to 14, and the schools used the

governor's statement and the National Council's *Guide to Speech Week* as the stimuli.

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#### NEW YORK STATE WORKERS

The English Section of the New York State Teachers' Association at their Thanksgiving meeting elected the following officers: president, E. B. Richards, State Department, Albany; vice-president, Sarah A. Thomas, Chazy; secretary, F. W. Treible, Utica Free Academy, Utica; executive committee: Florence E. Carpenter, Central High School, Binghamton; A. B. Sias, West High School, Rochester; and Professor H. A. Eaton, Syracuse University, Syracuse.

These resolutions were also adopted unanimously:

1. That as English teachers we should cultivate in our private and public conversation an attitude toward our work which will tend to create a more general respect for our profession, and that with discretion we should, individually, seek to induce worthy young men and women to prepare for the teaching of English.

2. That the English Section send to the English teachers of the Association the recommendations for the following up of good speech campaigns as adopted today by the Speech Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English in session in Boston.

3. That we aim to take over and preserve in our work the spirit of joyful service which was so evident at the Boston meeting, from the realization that literature is a revelation of a phase of life and that all our teaching should unquestionably be adapted to life.

4. That for each county and city there should be a specialist in English who should in a spirit, not of personal domination, but of leadership, direct and co-ordinate instruction in English from the kindergarten through the high school and act as a clearing-house for ideas, making available to all teachers in his district the good work of any teacher.

5. That the teachers of the state should more generally make use of the debate and discussion material obtainable from the state library.

6. That each teacher of the English Section should study and seriously consider Mr. Richards' plan for a state debating league and annual tournament, discussing the project in their own school communities and reporting to the state specialist in English whether local sentiment is favorable to the formation of such a league.

7. That the English Section recommend to the New York State Teachers' Association an annual appropriation equal to fifty cents for each member of the English Section, in place of the present fixed appropriation of fifty dollars a year.

8. That this Section, mindful of the good work done by the committee on newspaper writing in the secondary school, and realizing that for so important a work more time is needed, continue this committee.

9. That the English Section of the New York State Teachers' Association issue not more than four times a year a bulletin devoted to the interests of English teachers and that the president of the Section appoint a committee to work out and plan the practical machinery and details.

*Committee on Resolutions:*

FLORENCE H. CARPENTER, Binghamton  
FREDERICK H. BAIR, University of Wisconsin  
NORMAN K. FRICK, Syracuse  
JAMES M. SPINNING, Rochester

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WEST VIRGINIA COUNCIL

The members of the West Virginia Council of Teachers of English met in session in the high-school library, Fairmont, at 1:30 o'clock, Friday afternoon, November 28, 1919. Mr. Walter Barnes, of the Fairmont Normal School, president of the Council, presided.

The following program was presented:

Report of the Council's Committee on Better Speech—Miss M. MAE NEPTUNE, West Virginia Wesleyan College.

The Effect of the Great War on Literature—Professor LINCOLN R. GIBBS, University of Pittsburgh.

Informal Report of the National Council's Committee on Minimum Essentials in English—Miss MARY B. FONTAINE, Charleston Public Schools.

Considerable discussion followed this talk, as it had that of Miss Neptune.

The subject of a new elementary- and high-school course of study in English was then taken up by the Council. It was recommended that a committee be appointed by the president to consider this very important subject. Other committees were suggested. The president will announce these committees later.

Miss Nellie W. Donley, head of the department of English of Morgantown High School, was elected secretary-treasurer of the Council to succeed Miss Mary Atkeson, who has left the state.

Perhaps one hundred members of the Council and other teachers of English from various parts of the state attended this meeting.

NELLIE W. DONLEY, *Secretary*

## THE PERIODICALS

## SOCIAL FACTORS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

Contending that improvement in English teaching is conditioned upon recognition of the fact that the subject is social, both in its objectives and in its method, Dr. T. W. Gosling, of the State Department of Education in Wisconsin, sets forth in a recent article one specific way in which teachers may learn how to socialize their instruction in composition. His suggestion is that the teacher of composition should identify himself with his class so completely that he will write frequently the themes required of the pupils. If he does, it is not likely that he will assign an unreasonable amount of writing; he will understand the difficulties of the pupils; he will be in a position to judge the quality of his instruction; he will have readily accessible objective standards of accomplishment; he will provide for his own growth; and he will stimulate a spirit of good feeling and of good fellowship in the entire group. The article is found in *School and Society* for December 27, 1919.

## GRAMMAR ONCE MORE

The interest in the teaching of grammar is perennial. Indeed, it seems now to be waxing. Among recent utterances on the subject is an article on "Grammar and Common Sense," by Professor O. O. Norris, of the State Normal College at Ypsilanti, Michigan, which appears in the *American Schoolmaster* for December, 1919. The writer contends that most persons think of grammar as something apart from reality and are not aware that an alien technique has been imposed upon our native tongue. He argues for common sense in treating grammar as the analysis of ideas. His point of view is illustrated at length by reference to the so-called retained object with a passive verb, which the writer would call an "erroneous construction," not, however, to be avoided. The article is preceded by an editorial which pleads for a fixed course in grammar arranged by grades and administered throughout the state of Michigan by the Department of Education.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCABULARY

An article on "Why the Vocabulary of Pupils is so Limited," by Palmyra Marquez in the *Porto Rico School Review* for November, 1919, has a familiar sound. "Tests given to pupils of intermediate and grammar grades," says the writer, "show that their vocabulary is very limited. This is due largely to the fact that teachers accept the same statements year after year and fail to develop gradually an interest in

the use of new words." A batch of business letters written on examination, for example, all began in the same way. The pupils should be given exercises which will help them increase their vocabulary. These might include finding synonyms, preparing a booklet on adverbs, giving long sentences, requiring variation from the text when reproducing, and prohibiting the overworking of certain words. Pupils will improve if they have an ideal of developing and using a varied vocabulary.

#### THE HIGH-SCHOOL LIBRARY

The journal called *Teaching*, published by the Kansas State Normal School at Emporia, Kansas, is devoted from time to time to single topics. The issue for September, 1919, for example, contains a number of articles on the high-school library. W. H. Kerr, the librarian, writes most helpfully on "Putting the Library in Order." This consists in classification, making an accession record, putting on marks of identification, and arranging a charging system. Miss Agnes King, reference librarian, contributes an excellent list of five hundred books for a high-school library made up from suggestions reported by members of the Normal School faculty. A similar report is offered by Mr. John B. Heffelfinger, superintendent of schools in Arkansas City, Kansas. Still another list, one of magazines for teachers, is the work of Grace M. Leaf, cataloguer of the library. No one interested in library problems will fail to write for a copy of this excellent pamphlet.

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#### USEFUL DOCUMENTS

The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh issues the third edition of its useful *Debate Index*. This is sent postpaid for thirty cents.—Recent bulletins of the Bureau of Education are as follows: "Education in Parts of the British Empire," "Education in France in 1916-1918," "Education in Germany," "Educational Work of the Young Men's Christian Associations," "The Junior College," "Bibliography of Home Economics," "The Administration of Correspondence-Study Departments of Universities and Colleges," "The Federal Executive Departments as Sources of Information for Libraries," "Financial and Building Needs of the Schools of Lexington, Kentucky," "Summer Schools in 1918," "Work of the Bureau of Education for the Natives of Alaska, 1917-18," "The United States School Garden Army."—The Federal Board for Vocational Education has issued its *Third Annual Report* in two volumes. *Bulletin No. 35* of the Board is a pamphlet of

270 pages dealing with the use and preparation of food.—The American Red Cross has published a statement concerning the work of the society during the war. Address at Washington, D.C.—Recent school documents of the Boston Board of Education are entitled: "Salaries of Public-School Teachers in Cities of the United States," and "Increased Salaries for Teachers and Members of the Supervisory Staff of the Boston Public Schools."—The State Department of Public Instruction of New Jersey at Trenton prepared a suggestive program for the observance of Americanization Day in the schools of New Jersey on October 27, the anniversary of the birth of Theodore Roosevelt.—The intermediate department of the training school of the Kansas State Normal School at Emporia has prepared and published a magazine called *The Searchlight* under the direction of Miss Ruby Minor, the supervisor of English. Those who wish to see what can be done in English by the project method with the help of a printing press will send ten cents for a copy of Volume I, No. 1, of *The Searchlight*.